

desert the ship and take to other means of winning a livelihood.

The comparison to be drawn is that the Christian gives too much and too freely for the support of his creed. Freethinkers do not help to any great extent, and frequently not enough. The Christian may be led to such acts by a belief in a dividend to be declared in the hereafter, that is, believe that he is actually buying a front seat, up near the throne, and that god almighty has some angel with a book jotting down how much he gives and how frequently he makes a contribution. The Free-thinker has no such incentive, but properly analyzed, far greater incentive confronts him, if that by his efforts the race may be won from priestcraft and superstition whereby a greater happiness may be wrought for all.

Whenever you hear a man or woman ask how much there is in it to do a thing or not to do a thing you may put it down that a supreme selfishness dominates that mind.

Suppose Galileo had asked that question, or that Giordano Bruno had reflected over it when asked to recant! Where would their blessed memories have been today? Suppose Charles Bradlaugh had stopped to find out how much there was in it before waging his great war for the freedom of the British press. Suppose G. W. Foote had entertained similar thoughts before publishing that issue of his Freethinker which brought on the prosecution, he might have been saved from Holloway jail but poverty would have felt differently towards him. Ingersoll might have been governor of Illinois but for opinion's sake. Take Darwin, Huxley, Tyndale, Spencer, and other great leaders in the world of scientific thought, if they had paused upon the threshold of investigation to ask what was in it their great works would have been altogether lost to the world. Even had Thomas Paine asked himself the question before entering upon that great march for liberty Old Glory might not be yet unfurled to the breeze.

What is there in it?

What will people think?

These are the great bugaboos in the world of mental liberty. Never mind what people think so long as you know you are right. Never bother about the dollars and cents if you see a duty perform it and don't ask foolish questions.

Under the guidance of shallow selfseeks the ark of the social covenant has been abandoned upon the rock of forgetfulness and men strive to manage matters mundane on a basis of brute selfishness, chasing a foolish rainbow of fatuous utilitaria and sink deeper into the orthodoxy boge. Christian charity is too much lauded and too much extolled.

The true test of a man's charity is not in what he actually gives, but in that which he reserves for his own use out of a given income. There is neither charity or benevolence or philanthropy in the donations of a Carnegie or a Rockefeler. Both have much more than they give. They do not want nor

possess less than which they have given. A tramp with half a dollar who gives it even to a tramp to enable him to get a square meal has performed a greater act of true charity than Carnegie and Rockefeler combined.

What is there in it?

Don't ask the question but pitch right in and do. What will people say or think?

Ignore them and knowing you are right go ahead with the task that duty prescribes for you.

MUCKRAKERS.

Roosevelt is responsible for two expressions that will stick to him so long as his memory shall continue among men.

Muckraker.

Fifth little atheist.

With the latter Freethought writers of prominence and note have had to deal. It was an un-called for expression of his personal contempt for a man and a patriot greater than he by far. It was a cheap attempt to play to the ignorant Christian reflex and a bid for the plaudits of the multitude.

The former was used as a cheap attempt at political play and designed for application towards those of an opposite faith or temperament. Since its origin it has been used more or less by political hack writers and penny-alarmists, and strange to say the reading public has well understood the application.

If a man or woman does not agree with you call him or her a muckraker and the answer is looked upon as being complete. No other term is needed. The sum of personal feeling is full.

Some of the daily papers have fallen into the habit of using the term in a general sense and applying it to persons whose tastes in a measure of business or policy agrees not with their own. As a general rule a well-conducted newspaper is but a reflex, or mirror, in which the community sees itself day by day, and yet there are many of the "yellow" variety that have so little circulation at home, but a large one abroad, because they are not understood at a distance. To be termed a muckraker by such as these would indeed be a compliment. The muckraker is one who is supposed to delve into the seamy sides of life and by various exposures divulge what really ought to be allowed to pass by unnoticed. "Muck" is slang for dirt or trash. The "raker" is her or she who works in it or about it. "Muckrakers" is a man or woman who sets to work in or about the dirt or trash, or the useless rubbish of human life.

The Blade is in receipt of a clipping from some newspaper, the name of which is not given, published somewhere in the United States, the letter or envelope without a letter, bearing it being post-marked Chillicothe, Ohio. The clipping gives a list of those whom its editor is pleased to term muckrakers, and includes the following:

Lincoln Steffens, Charles E. Russell, Cleveland Moffet, rakers of political muck.

Ida Tarbell, Thomas W. Lawson, Samuel Hopkins Adams, rakers of financial, industrial or business muck.

Maxim Gorky, Jack London, Upton St. Clair, literary rakers of social muck.

Edwin Marwick, poetic raker of the muck of poverty.

Eugene Higgins, artist muckraker.

From this we are to assume that the men and women named are rakers in and about the muck of politics, finance, industry, social, and artistic, as well as the muck of poverty.

Great, indeed, must be the brain force of the author of that delectable compound, for if there was ever a delver in or raker of muck that author, or that editor, is the one person above all others who should be dubbed with the title. The Blade does not undertake to defend the persons named from the attack made upon them, feeling that they are all capable of protecting themselves against such an outburst. The argument offered, however, is that any man or woman who sees and understands a human wrong and sets to work to right it must be a muckraker. The political writers thus designated are the safety-valves of our political life, for with a keen insight into governmental monstrosities they expose and explain, thereby forcing a more moral tone, or compelling political tricks to be played more in secret. As to Lawson and his associates, their exposures have done much to bring the nation out of those inevitable dangers that were following in the wake of frenzied finance, while Gorky, and those classed with him, are daily exposing the wrongs humanity is compelled to suffer. Worst of all, indeed, is he who undertakes to hurl an insult at poverty by directing attention to its muck. Poverty is not a crime. It suffers much. Many suffer from it. The causes are not inherent.

It is noticed, however, that the brilliant mind that conceived the article failed to include the religious muckrakers. On this point the Blade calls attention to the fact that nowhere in the wide world has there existed muckrakers like Parkhurst, Comstock and Sam Jones. These fairly glory in muck. They sought it and found it, and finding it fairly revelled in it. In the name of an offended deity they participated in human sin and shame. This is muckraking with a vengeance, but these are left out of the list because their muckraking was done in the name of religion.

Besides the Bible ought to have been given special mention. Considering the muck it contains it must require considerable raking to find the few morsels of goodness it contains.

After all, we suppose it all depends whose ox is being gored. To a devout Christian the Blade is also a muckraker, and to the Blade that same Christian might be regarded in the same category. It is all a difference of opinion. If a man does not believe as you believe, if he refuses to worship at your shrine, if he declines to vote with you on political issues, denounce him as a muckraker and he is deprived of further argument.

This is why Roosevelt called Thomas Paine a filthy little atheist, and he invented the muckraker and the mollycoddle to express his personal contempt for political enemies.

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MRS. RICKER ON CLIFFORD GREVE.

Neither Bryan or Roosevelt can be Accounted Truly Great While Believing in Myths. Helping to Build Libraries.

Marilla M. Ricker, the lady lawyer of Dover, New Hampshire, the one woman in all America who has done so much for the cause of education and humanity, without hope or expectation of pecuniary reward, has just contributed to the establishment of a public library at New Durham, an act of which the Boston Herald gives the following notice:

WOMAN DISCIPLE OF BOB INGERSOLL HELPS TOWN.

Mrs. Ricker, Lawyer, Sends Check, and Will Give Books to Library.

Mrs. Marilla M. Ricker, lawyer, suffragist and disciple of Ingersoll today sent a check for \$50 to Mrs. Sarah Coburn of New Durham, chairman of the committee which is raising funds for the furnishings of the new town hall in that town, which will be dedicated in January.

Mrs. Ricker has agreed to give more money if it is needed to complete the furnishing of the hall, and has also signified her intention of donating to the New Durham town library a complete set of the works of Robert Ingersoll.

It will be recalled that Mrs. Ricker recently wrote a long article in the defense of Paine's memory which was reproduced in the Blade. At all times is she fearless in her expression of truth and never objects to being termed a "disciple of Bob Ingersoll."

Mrs. Ricker has just favored the Blade with a personal communication in which she undertakes to criticize the views expressed by Clifford Greve upon his opinions concerning Bryan and Roosevelt, in the following language:-

"I was annoyed by the article of Clifford Greve in the November Blade. I want to say here, and I think I can without fear of successful contradiction, that no man in these enlightened days can be a great man or a great leader who believes in myth and miracle. He is either a hypocrite or he has a "powerfully" weak spot in his head."

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